

REMARKS

Claims 2, 8, 10, 16, 18, and 24 have been amended. Claims 44-67 have been withdrawn. Claims 2-43 are currently pending in the application.

Applicant hereby confirms the election of Claims 1-43 for examination.

The Examiner objected to claims 4, 6, 8, 12, 14, 16, 20, and 22 for being dependent upon a rejected base claim. The Examiner stated claims 4, 6, 8, 12, 14, 16, 20, 22, and 25 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. The Examiner rejected claims 2-3, 5, 7, 9-11, 13, 15, 17-19, 21, 23, and 25-43 under 35 USC § 102(b) as being anticipated by Judice (USPN 3,937,878). These objections and rejections are respectfully traversed and Applicant requests reconsideration of the application.

102(b) Rejection

In order for a reference to anticipate an invention, each and every element of the claimed invention must be found in a single reference. "Moreover, it is incumbent upon the examiner to identify wherein each and every facet of the claimed invention is disclosed in the applied reference." Ex parte Levy, 17 USPQ2d 1461, 1462 (Bd Pat App & Inter 1990). Applicant respectfully submits that Judice does not anticipate Applicant's claimed invention because Judice does not teach or disclose each and every element of the claimed invention.

Judice uses only one halftone technique having the same halftone parameters for halftoning. In particular, Judice utilizes a single dither matrix containing dither threshold values (see col. 2, lines 56-65 and col. 3, lines 16-25). Every pixel in the image is assigned a corresponding dither threshold value from the dither matrix,

and that dither threshold value is used whenever the corresponding pixel is halftoned. The same dither threshold value is used when the corresponding pixel is first halftoned and during any subsequent "conditional replenishment" halftoning (see col. 2, line 60 to col. 3, line 2; col. 3, line 63 to col. 4, line 8; and col. 4, line 42 to col. 5, line 8)). Judice does not teach or disclose changing any of the halftone parameters of time. For example, Judice does not teach or suggest changing any of the values of the dither threshold values, or their pixel assignments, over time.

Unlike Judice, Applicant's invention uses at least two halftone techniques having at least one differing halftone parameter, as claimed in amended independent claims 1, 10, and 18. The at least two halftone techniques may be the same halftone method but with one or more different halftone parameters. By way of example only, in one embodiment in accordance with the invention, dithering may be the halftone method utilized, with one or more of the dither threshold values in one dither matrix differing from the dither threshold values in the other dither matrix. In another embodiment in accordance with the invention, the at least two halftone techniques may be different halftone methods, including, but not limited to, dithering and error diffusion.

The halftone technique changes from the previously used halftone technique after a certain number of input images have been halftoned. For example, in one embodiment in accordance with the invention, the halftone technique may change from the previously used halftone technique every time an input image or frame is halftoned. In another embodiment in accordance with the invention, the halftone technique may change after a predetermined number of images or frames have been halftoned (e.g. every 3rd or 6th). And in other embodiments in accordance with the invention, the halftone technique may change at random times (i.e., not according to a fixed number).

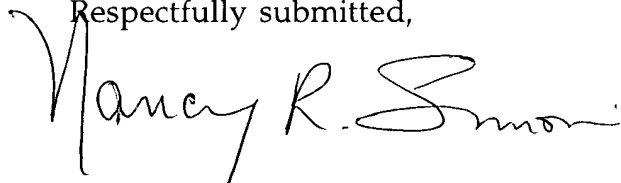
Applicant respectfully submits that Judice does not teach or disclose Applicant's claimed invention. As discussed above, Judice uses a single dither matrix with fixed dither threshold values. Judice does not teach or suggest changing any of the parameters used to halftone an image. Consequently, Judice does not anticipate Applicant's invention as claimed.

Claims 3-9 and 26-31 depend from independent claim 2, claims 11-17 and 32-37 depend from independent claim 10, and claims 19-25 and 38-43 depend from independent claim 18. Since Judice does not anticipate independent claims 2, 10 and 18, Applicant respectfully submits Judice does not anticipate dependent claims 2-9, 11-17, and 19-43 either. Applicant therefore requests the allowance of claims 2-43.

In light of the amendments and discussion above, Applicant believes that all claims currently remaining in the application are allowable over the prior art, and respectfully requests allowance of such claims.

Date: October 17, 2003

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Nancy R. Simon". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized "N" and "S".

Nancy R. Simon
Attorney for Applicant
Reg. No. 36,930
Simon & Koerner LLP
10052 Pasadena Avenue, Suite B
Cupertino, California 95014
direct dial (408) 873-3941; fax (408) 873-3945